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1608/5921.

THREE LETTERS:

I. On the BARBARITIES lately committed
in PARIS.

II. To the MONTHLY REVIEWERS.

III. To the Rev. Dr. PYE, Archdeacon of
DURHAM.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

An ADDRESS to the PUBLICK;

OCCASIONED BY A LETTER

PUBLISHED IN THE PAPER OF THE TIMES,

WITH THE SIGNATURE

OF

DUNELMENSIS.

BY

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

What! armed for virtue, when I point the pen,
Brand the bold front of guilty, shameless men;
Can there be wanting, to defend my cause,
Lights of the Church, or Guardians of the Laws?

POPE.

L O N D O N:

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LETTER I.

ON THE BARBARITIES LATELY COMMITTED IN PARIS.

To the EDITOR *of the* WORLD.

August 18, 1792.

SIR,

I Am far from being a powerful, but I hope that I am a sincere friend to my country, and to mankind. I should wish, if it was possible, to counteract, and defeat, the bad effects of the *civil* poison, which has been industriously infused into the minds of many honest, but unguarded persons, by the emissaries of Faction, and Sedition. I take this melancholy publick opportunity, to desire such minds to reflect, that the writings of Dr. PRIESTLEY, and Mr. PAINE, and the conduct of their abettors, naturally, and directly *tend* to make LONDON a theatre of all those horrors, which, at present, overwhelm the capital of FRANCE with calamity, and desolation. For *my* part, I am so weak, and effeminate a citizen; so little of the *hardy* patron of the *Rights of Man* (the misapplied, and vague word grows detestable to humanity) that I think the abolition of arbitrary government, and the destruction of the BASTILLE, dearly obtained by those crimes, and distresses, which, at present, distract, and harass, and which will, too probably, hereafter, spread their woes over that unhappy, and devoted country. If the wretches who set fire to their own premises, and consequently, to those of their neighbours, excite our extreme indignation, what
A should

should be our sentiments of those incendiaries, who are eager to raise a flame of more extensive ruin, through the kingdom? If it is suggested to every breast that is properly warmed with philanthropy, that too great sacrifices have been already made to the extirpation of excessive power, on the Continent; what must we think of *any* violent hostilities against the established government of *our* Island, where our lives, and properties, the freedom of our persons, and the freedom of our minds, are secured by all possible protection? a government, whose worst fault is an important, but an amiable one; it's omission legally to punish those men, who, to realize their extravagances, and chimeras; and to redress wrongs comparatively trivial, and which are inseparable from all opulent, and great Empires; at the expence of the blood, and unutterable agony of mind of their fellow-citizens, would exterminate our LAWS, and our RELIGION.

The comprehension of the *Vast*, and *Unbounded*, always eludes the narrow limits of the human mind. In a few men, there is an Enthusiasm, and Romance of Virtue; in Others, and in More, I fear, there is a gigantick, and enormous growth of Vice; to either of which, the Politician, and the Philosopher find it difficult to assign it's magnitude.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged,

And most obedient servant,

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

LETTER



LETTER II.

TO THE MONTHLY REVIEWERS.

September 4, 1792.

GENTLEMEN,

WITH *that* appellation I accost you; though you deserve not such a compliment from *me*. But in the forms of address, the *Courtesy of England* indulges candour with a very extensive latitude;—there are, likewise, degrees of illiberal conduct;—in your critique on my correspondence with the Bishop of DURHAM, you have not equalled the *effrontery* of your brethren, the *Critical Reviewers*.

You see, too, that I am so complaisant as to keep up the farce of your *literary Consistory*. I will not strip you of your *WE*, and *US*; your little spurious baubles of intellectual royalty. A Poet ought sympathetically to admit even extravagant fictions. A plain, prosaic man would insist, that I have been traduced, as a Correspondent with a Prelate, only by an individual; by a sycophant, and hypocrite of a priest. But I will suppose, in compliance with *your* habitual imposture, that I have been censured, from the AREOPAGUS of Literature, by a venerable assembly of ATHE-NIAN SAGES, AND LEGISLATORS.

My present remonstrance to *you*, Gentlemen, or, indeed, rather to the publick, shall be short. Minutely to expostulate with the *Monthly*, almost immediately after I had completely refuted the *Critical Reviewers*, is a labour, if not too humble for my pride, too severe for my vivacity. Besides, it would be a work of supererogation. You have been inflexible, and without remorse, in your injustice to me, for twenty years. Yet, as my heart is a forgiving, and tractable one, I was disposed to esteem, and respect you, for an unexpected change in your treatment of me; for the praise which you have given to some of my late productions. But I now observe, with some regret, that the strictures which are

pointed at *one* set of *Reviewers*, will be equally applicable to any other class, of that denomination. Whenever it serves your venal purpose, you distort, you pervert the sense, the sentiments of an authour;—the moral motives which actuated his pen. You endeavour to persuade your readers, that I offered my poetical tribute to the Bishop of DURHAM, with a selfish view; and that I published our correspondence merely because my selfish hopes were disappointed. That this is a gross misrepresentation of the truth, every one will be convinced, who peruses that correspondence, and what I have lately published, as an Appendix to a political pamphlet, and in the paper of the *WORLD*. A man may publicly avow a total change in his opinion of others; he may make a transition from praise to censure, without any shameful versatility in *him*;—but from very reprehensible conduct in *them*.—Such a warrantable revolution of sentiments was effected in *my* mind, with regard to the *Monthly Reviewers*, and their *Patriarch*, the Bishop of DURHAM.

I am sorry to see, that you are basely bribed, or meanly influenced, to favour wealth, and power, against an ingenious disposition, in an humbler station of life, but ambitious of superiour objects. The tenour of all your former political, and religious criticism, shows how palpably you have contradicted *yourselves*, that you might injure *me*. You would have presented a civick wreath to a writer who had exposed the pride and luxury of our superior clergy, if you had not been engaged to immolate Mr. STOCKDALE to the Bishop of DURHAM.

Instead of driving, and goading one of your sneaking priests out of his cell, to teize me, I wish that you had *cried havoc*, and *let slip* one of your *dogs of war*, and slaughter, upon me;—one of your French Revolutionists;—one of your Cannibals; who, under the dominion of a blind frenzy, devoured Mr. BURKE. The insolence, and absurdity of *such* an adversary, would have defeated his aim; they would have promoted my literary credit. A brutal fury, and a Jesuitical art are incompatible.—But unless you are extremely on your guard, you will be deceived by a priest; he will make you believe that he is the tender, and compassionate friend of the man, at whom he is levelling a
deadly

deadly blow. The *Theſſalian* Sorcerer medicates his poiſon with aromatic ſpices. He publickly charges me with ſelfiſhneſs, and duplicity; and he aſſures me, in the ſame breath, that he *much wiſhes me proſperity, and eaſe*.—Like his anceſtor JUDAS, he betrays, with a kiſs.

The critique to which I refer, deſerves not, as I have already remarked, my particular animadverſions. It gives not *one* extract from my pamphlet. It gives two or three ſpecimens of a *Reviewer's* hackneyed art. It drags, from my letters, into it's ſervice, a few words, or expreſſions, which can only ſeem ridiculous, or improper, when they are thus detached, or torne from their context.

Your firſt remark, as it conveys a proper ſuggeſtion, is greatly in favour of my pamphlet; though, I know, that, from *you*, it couches an invidious, and depreciating idea. You obſerve, that “the Biſhop of DURHAM's part in this “correſpondence is very ſhort; while Mr. STOCKDALE's “letters, and introductory obſervations, make the pamph- “let.”—Whoever is diſpoſed to read thoſe letters, will, I flatter myſelf, be encouraged to read them by *this* information; for if the Biſhop's letters had made a conſiderable part of the correſpondence, the pamphlet muſt have inevitably foundered with a dead weight. If the little eccleſiaſtical hireling means to offer incenſe to the vulgar pride of his maſter; if he means to vindicate his dignity from the condeſcenſion of paying any particular epistolary attention to *me*; by the ſpirit of a more generous pride I am warranted to reply, that I never felt my mind more *humblly* employed (with regard to the perſon whom I was addreſſing) than when it argued, and expoſtulated with the Biſhop of DURHAM.

I neither *was angry*; nor *am I, now, more angry*, moſt equitable, and noble *Monthly Reviewers*. To treat dullneſs, impertinence, and inſolence, as they deſerve, gives me pleaſure, without pain. There is, likewise, a fair, and open policy in ſuch conduct. I do not attribute very high merit to this letter, if I preſume to think that it will defeat the aim of *your* malevolent criticiſm; and that my correſpondence with the Biſhop of DURHAM will, now, be as acceptable to the publick, as if that criticiſm had not been written.—Common ſenſe, likewise, will, hereafter, aſcribe thoſe hoſ-
tilities

tilities from *Reviewers* which may yet await me, to the resentment of the Dull, the Venal, and the Vindictive; and perhaps to my merit.

When the gratification of self-love coincides with the performance of our duty to mankind, we are directly owing in the path of virtue. To detect, and expose *your* illiberal, and unprincipled acts, is, to accelerate the progress, to extend the diffusion, of all agreeable, and useful knowledge. If *other* men of letters would adopt *my* present attention, and activity of mind, you would soon be totally exploded, as criticks;—and during the expiring remainder of your literary existence, you would be reduced to your circumscribed, and proper orbit; to that of *Monthly Advertisers*. This good effect, indeed, might be produced by *one* observing, and persevering man. Nor would talents be at all necessary, completely to defeat you; a little sagacity, and perseverance only, would be requisite. You would be the involuntary auxiliaries of your conquerors: for your calumnies are, in general, so gross, and your artifices are so palpable, that by *them* you stab *yourselves*.—He, then, who should rid the Republic of Letters of its *Reviewers*, would not need *Herculean* strength:—He would not have the *Augean* stables to clear; but he would have a deal of rubbish to remove.

I take this opportunity to warn every generous mind, which is intent on the acquisition of honest, and fair Fame, not to be discouraged, in the pursuit of its great object, not to contract its expanded view, from temporary disappointments. The most fortunate Authours have not obtained immortality, without great difficulties, and conflicts, of *some* kind. That selfishness, and malevolence, which, for awhile, intercept the splendour, and retard the success of talents, contribute, ultimately, however involuntarily, to call forth, and to establish, all their excellence. Genius, like Virtue, gains vigour, and glory, from opposition. And GOD, and NATURE, have assured both, that if they maintain a constant fortitude, and an indefatigable exertion, they may be certain of their reward.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient, and most
humble Servant,
PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

LETTER III.

TO THE REVEREND DR. PYE, ARCHDEACON
OF DURHAM.

London, Sept. 12, 1792.

Good Mr. ARCHDEACON,

YOU see that I can occasionally adopt the affectionate mummerly of a Bishop. Though I question that you will ever receive so respectful a salutation from your generous, and judicious Patron, and Diocesan.

I am sorry to find that my slight mention of you, in one of my letters to the Bishop of DURHAM, dethroned your mind from its habitual philosophy, and virtue; and threw it into tumult, and perturbation. Excuse me; I never had any intercourse with you; I could have no personal resentment against you: but I could not forbear introducing the example of *your* good fortune with a benevolent, primitive, and distinguishing Prelate; it was a *Case* so happily, and accurately, *in point*.

But I beg your pardon for taking only such oblique, and distant notice of you. If, hereafter, I am informed, either by oral, or printed authority, that you are still strongly disgusted with my *transient* homage to your *austere* piety; that a man of *your* self-denying morals can be actuated with the unchristian spirit of revenge; I will endeavour to atone for the superficiality of my late allusion: I will endeavour to soften, and moderate the notorious buckram, and stiffness of your theology, by giving it a more lively, and poignant agitation.

Good

Good Mr. Archdeacon, I wish you uninterrupted dignity, and satisfaction, from all the *Charges*, and *Discharges* of your *Office*, and *Devotion*.

I am,

With *episcopal* sincerity, and zeal,

Your *affectionate* Brother,

And most obedient humble Servant,

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

An

An ADDRESS to the PUBLICK.

Tuesday, Sept. 18, 1792.

EVEN a scrupulous solicitude for the esteem of the PUBLICK, while it's object is promoted by honest, and ingenuous means, of that publick, I should suppose, deserves the approbation. It is, unfortunately, not beyond the power of Dullness, and Falsehood, to make injurious impressions in the minds of those by whom we should wish to be respected. And it is only from my moral, and manly homage to *such* minds, that I take particular notice of the scurrility which has lately been thrown at me by a *French* disposition, and a *Gothick* understanding.

The long threatened, but impotent rage of DUNELMENSIS, at length broke forth upon me, in the *Times* of Friday, the fourteenth day of the present month. After frequent grumbings, this little *Vesuvius* played off it's eruption; a flame which presented it's objects, distorted, mis-shapen, and confused;—how different from the fire of the God of Day, which invigorates, and brightens the beauties of nature, and the mind of man!

I think it proper to begin with this creature, almost where *he* ends. As an apology for not subscribing his letter with his own name (which an assailant of *me* who had possessed a spark of honour would have thought indispensable, and would have acted accordingly) he asserts, with a miserable sophistry, that “if what he has advanced be true, his name could not strengthen his arguments; if false, it could not support them.”—Mankind are so far generous, that when they are addressed, in the aggregate, they require some substantial proofs of heavy accusations. Yet one of the most contemptible of
human

human beings demands a larger tribute to his veracity than the younger CARO would have claimed, in old ROME. For *he* was too conversant with common justice, with common sense, ever to expect that his countrymen would be satisfied that the charges which he might bring against any man, were true, unless they were supported by his presence, or by his name. I have openly, and avowedly, attacked selfish, and insolent power; and *monstrous*, and pampered vice; not, I hope, inconsistently with friendship to mankind. A little black mole, invisible, and inaccessible, from his monkish, and squalid cell, throws up his dirty clods of falsehood at me; and he would have them pass, in the light of day, for the diamonds of truth. He, who with an adopted signature, is eager, and industrious to vilify another, *in answer* (as he pretends) to assertions which have been subscribed with the unquestionable name of their authour, is a *Traducer*, and a *Coward*. And yet *this* writer has the presumption to expect that a discerning, and generous Publick will give credit to his testimony; to his asseverations.

Most of the letter of DUNELMENSIS is outrageous, nonsensical abuse; and, therefore, it gives itself the lye. Other invectives, and charges, which have less the appearance of random, and profligate indignation, I have already obviated, and refuted; and, I flatter myself, to the satisfaction of every unprejudiced, and liberal reader. But from my great respect for publick esteem, I will most ingenuously answer two or three of his charges, which are not insignificant: they would, indeed, press down my sincerity with their weight, if I did not know that I was as *superiour* to the generality of mankind, in *some* parts of my nature, and *real* character, as I am *inferiour* to them, in *others*.

I have publickly owned that I applied to the Bishop of DURHAM for the Rectory of HARTBURN, while Dr. SHARP was living. Therefore, says my candid, and sagacious adversary, "I must have looked forward, with anxious expectation, for the decease of my benefactor." Let the plain truth be told, in short, and simple terms. My hope, as I have already observed, of obtaining the living,

living, was as faint, and therefore made as little impression in my mind, as can be imagined. I knew that my application to the Bishop would make no difference in the fate of Dr. SHARP. I have shown sufficient gratitude to his family, and to his relations. After HARTBURN became an object of speculation to me, I would have done any thing in my power to have saved his life. My expectation of success with the Bishop was so extremely languid, that I claim not, in the least degree, the merit of fortitude, when I inform the Publick that it had no more consequence in my thoughts than the most trivial occurrence of the day. It is well known to my friends, and acquaintance, that I never enjoyed a more pleasurable flow of spirits than after I had sent my request to the Bishop, and while I was employing my mind, like a good citizen of our great community, in censuring, and exposing, the pride, and luxury, and hypocrisy of the Priesthood. Yet I am told by this DUNELMENSIS that the Bishop refused me an interview, without a third person, "because the natural insolence of my temper was aggravated to phrenzy by disappointment." Pygmy souls, like *his*, who are tyrants, or slaves, as circumstances permit, or demand, always pronounce a spirited conduct, a free, and proper expostulation with our superiours in power, *insolence*; and they have no idea of the possibility of a man's maintaining a moral firmness, serenity, and gaiety, at a juncture which would throw *them* into a more than feminine impotence of mind. The letter to which I am deigning my attention, takes it's whole substance, and complexion, from the mean heart, from the low propensities, and habits of it's Authour. Hence, he rails against my selfishness, against my priestly, and rapacious appetite for the luxuries of the table; against my sycophantry, and flattery; against my puerile, and intemperate indignation. *All looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.* The celebrated Prince of CONDE, and Marshal TURENNE, were cotemporaries. False, and most absurd memoirs of those illustrious men were written, during their lives, by some illiberal *Valets de Chambre*, and *Priests*. "These fellows (said CONDE to TU-

“ RENNE (when they were talking on the subject) make you, and me, converse, and act, exactly as *they* would have conversed, and acted, if *they* had been in *our* situations.”

At one time, and not long ago, when I was in the North of ENGLAND, if I could have sacrificed every sentiment of honour to convivial pleasure, I might often have dined luxuriously at the table of a man (if he deserves the name) with whom it is infamy to associate; though, indeed, countenance is shown to him by some persons, whose conduct is only reprehensible when they most ignobly condescend to be *his* companions. As I had often been injured myself, by the lyes of malevolence, I accepted one or two invitations from him, while I thought that his guilt was at all questionable. But when I was, afterwards, informed of the certainty of his crime, by respectable, and indubitable authority; when I knew that after he had been publicly, and severely charged with it, he had not the courage, because he had not the power, to offer a shadow of a vindication;—when I knew that, on his knees, he had implored humane, and virtuous men (whom, probably, the insolence of his more collected hours thinks greatly his inferiours) not to expose his *monstrous* turpitude to the world; I then easily resolved to terminate, for ever, our short, and superficial acquaintance. If any vulgar, and virulent scribbler should at any time tell me that I envy the rank, and fortune of *such* a wretch, I should honestly reply, that we may hold a rank from nature, which, notwithstanding the many extreme difficulties, and distresses, with which it is often environed, we would not surrender for all the paltry, artificial, and accidental rank in the world;—that wealth, compared with this natural rank, is perfectly contemptible;—but that, opposed to the criminal whom I have in my eye, loaded with publick shame; mocked with splendid misery;—his *foul bosom* fraught with *the perilous stuff* which *preys upon* his heart; a poor, but honest, and virtuous man, covered with rags, shivering with cold, and faint with hunger, is a being unspeakably august, and unspeakably happy.

I now

I now feel myself obliged to mention Mr. EGERTON; of whom DUNELMENSIS has the *honour* to be the particular, strenuous, and slavish advocate. To be diffuse on Mr. EGERTON, as a moral subject, would be the idlest of prolixities. If *he*, and Dr. PYE have friends, they will not bring their names, unnecessarily, into open day; though I must do BOTH the justice to add, that *it is impossible to vilify* them.

I am told by this master of scurrility, that I write to satisfy my *necessities*. To that hard, and pressing motive, the world has often owed the writings of men who did equal honour to human nature by their talents, and by their virtues. I have generally written directly in the cause of morality, good government, and religion; all my *necessities* are amply supplied; for to abridge my wants, is an object of my daily attention, and care; therefore, thanks be to GOD, to Lord THURLOW, and to myself. I have many failings, and faults; but I need no superfluous wealth, to purchase, and to conceal insatiable fornication, and incest; or to purchase, and to conceal, a crime, which it is almost criminal to *name*. I never payed, nor *was* payed, for the insertion of *any* thing written by *me*, in a newspaper.

I cannot refute this animal more forcibly to the conviction of common penetration, and of all those who have the least knowledge of me, as a man, or an authour, than by quoting some of his ribaldry. He says, that "I came to DURHAM, purposely to catch the eye, and obtrude myself on the notice of the Bishop;—that I sent him a few *sleepy* sermons; useless in any other temple than that of ———; that I annoyed him with a few *clumsy* rhymes of fulsome panegyrick; and then, because my *end was defeated*, I loaded with the most virulent, and unprovoked abuse, that EXALTED character, to which I had so recently acted the cringing, mercenary sycophant." I here present to the reader the collected, and concluding energy of his letter, as a specimen of his dispassionate regard to justice, and to truth. There is not *one* word of abuse in all my correspondence with the Bishop of DURHAM. The violence of exasperated Dullness often defeats its aim,

aim, and fortunately recoils on itself. I have, unguardedly, polluted my paper with some of the grossest asperity of the clerical clown. Sarcasm without delicacy, is as odious as obscenity without wit. It is rather entertaining to see this man charging *me* with "illiberal, and unqualified language;" with "virulent, and unprovoked abuse;" especially as it is likewise entertaining to see him declare that "he is unbiassed by personal enmity." I always go forth, as a writer, with my own name; therefore no *Gentleman* will give the least credit to any mere assertion of an anonymous ruffian, who brings against me the heaviest, and most acrimonious accusations. However, I give full credit to DUNELMENSIS, where, in defending the Bishop of DURHAM, he tells us, that he is *uninfluenced by interested expectation*. But I believe this declaration, for a very different reason from that which *he* assigns. *His* pretended reason for not indulging any agreeable expectation from the Bishop, is, because "he has not the honour of being known to him." But I apprehend the real reason to be, that from his consciousness of being, now, *thoroughly* known to his lordship, he no longer expects to be, again, lavishly, and shamefully indulged, by episcopal benevolence. A prelate, who neither has distinction, nor generosity, to entertain a christian charity for common, and pardonable faults, at length finds himself obliged to frown on *enormities*.

I am sorry that Sir HENRY VANE has come into the hands of this rustick, on *my* account. I never foolishly boasted of the Baronet's attention to me while I was at DURHAM; but it would have been indelicate, and ungrateful, not particularly to have excepted *him* from a just, and general censure. Let him permit me to observe, that he is a very well bred, and polite gentleman; so far, it certainly is *his habit to act differently from the rest of his brethren*. For urbanity of manners is, by no means, a characteristick of our clergy.

To see one person who is destitute of the very elements of good breeding affect a delicacy, and politeness to another of the same character, is the most ridiculous of farces. This *Athenian Ecclesiastick*, at the close of his letter

letter, "is afraid that he is trespassing on the kindness of the Conductor of the *Times*, and, *perhaps*, on the patience of his readers." I can, with a moral certainty, solve *one* of his fears, *affirmatively*; the *other*, *negatively*. Every *Gentleman*, every liberal, and polished mind, while he is perusing the letter of DUNELMENSIS, must be sick of the strain in which it is written. But the scurrility of that letter did not trespass, *one farthing*, on the feelings of the Newsmonger; who informed it's authour, long ago, that it would not be inserted in *his* paper, unless it was paid for; from this publick declaration, and from the daily tenour of his paper, we may infer, that no trespass is ever made on *his* patience, as a publisher, unless when it is expected from him, that any literary, malicious, or political ribaldry, is to be *gratuitously* conveyed through the *common shoar* of the *Times*.

As an authour, I am reproached by this man, as I have often been by other Grub-street writers, with impertinent, and obtrusive egotism. I flatter myself, it will appear, that whenever I have spoken to my own advantage, the dangerous frankness has not been the result of my vanity, and presumption; but that it was extorted from me by calumny, persecution, and oppression, ungenerously availing themselves of my unfortunate circumstances, and situations. PLUTARCH writes a Treatise expressly to show the occasions on which a man's praise of himself may not be invidious.—"It is *his* opinion that "when an ingenuous mind, unaided by wealth, and power, "is assailed by slander; by affected contempt; by gross "injustice, and injuries; it has a right to vindicate itself, "without restraint; to assert the worth of it's nature, and "acquirements. He makes this generous resentment the "mark of a firm, and manly spirit;—a resentment, which "is a sure antidote against the envy of great, and congenial souls, by rising *above* the envy of dullness, and "malignity. Souls of that excellent frame are so far "from condemning, or censuring unfortunate genius, "when the rigour of the world obliges it to give some "degree of encomium to itself, that they justify its ardour, "by catching it's enthusiasm."

Such

Such are the sentiments of the sage, the modest, and the virtuous PLUTARCH. I did not mean to offer them to the reflexion of DUNELMENSIS; but to submit them to the consideration of those, whose disposition, and character are not abhorrent from the morals, and reputation of the Grecian philosopher. No amiable impression is to be made on a head, and heart like those of my adversary; but we may expect every equitable indulgence from liberal, and cultivated minds. *Flint* has a hardness, which is not malleable: *Gold* has an expansive, though not a feeble ductility.

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

FINIS.

